CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:

configuring, within a network that includes one or more server(s), switching fabric(s), and storage devices, a plurality of cache devices to be connected to the switching fabric; and

caching data in the cache devices to make the data available to the server(s).

2. A method, comprising:

configuring, within a network that includes one or more server(s), switching fabric(s), and storage devices, at least one cache device to be connected to the switching fabric; and

caching data in the cache device to make the data available to the server(s).

3. A method, comprising:

configuring, within a network that includes one or more server(s), switching fabric(s), and storage devices, a plurality of cache devices to be embedded within the switching fabric; and

caching data in the cache devices to make the data available to the server(s).

4. A method, comprising:

configuring, within a network that includes one or more server(s), switching fabric(s), and storage devices, a plurality of cache devices to be collocated with the servers; and

caching data in the cache devices to make the data available to the server(s).

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the cache devices are interconnected by a cache fabric, and at least one said cache device is simultaneously connected to the switching fabric.

6. The method of claim 3, wherein the cache devices are interconnected by a cache fabric, and at least one the cache devices is simultaneously connected to the switching fabric.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric operate in conjunction with one another by sharing common control and management.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric operate in conjunction with one another by sharing common control and management.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric are merged into a single fabric.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric are merged into a single fabric.

11. A system, comprising:

a network having one or more server(s), switching fabric(s) and storage devices, and including a plurality of cache devices connected to the switching fabric(s); and

the cache devices including cached data available to the server(s).

12. A system, comprising:

a network having one or more server(s), switching fabric(s) and storage devices, and including at least one cache device connected to the switching fabric(s); and

the cache devices including cached data available to the server(s).

13. A system, comprising:

a network having one or more server(s), switching fabric(s) and storage devices, and including a plurality of cache devices embedded within the switching fabric(s); and

the cache devices including cached data available to the server(s).

14. A system, comprising:

a network having one or more server(s), switching fabric(s) and storage devices, and including a plurality of cache devices collocated with the servers; and

the cache devices including cached data available to the server(s).

15. The system of claim 11, wherein the cache devices are interconnected by a cache fabric, and at least one of the cache devices is simultaneously connected to the switching fabric.

16. The system of claim 13, wherein the cache devices are interconnected by a cache fabric, and at least one of the cache devices is simultaneously connected to the switching fabric.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric operate in conjunction with one another by sharing common control and management.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric operate in conjunction with one another by sharing common control and management.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric are merged into a single fabric.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein the cache fabric and the switching fabric are merged into a single fabric.

21. A method comprising:

in a first cache device, detecting a data write to a write address from a data source coupled to a fabric in which the cache is located to a data storage unit also coupled to the fabric in which the cache is located; and

invalidating data stored in the first cache device at an address corresponding to the write address.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising broadcasting the write address to other distributed cache devices.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the other distributed cache devices are located in the fabric and are coupled to the first cache device though a bus.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein for each of the distributed cache devices having data stored at an address corresponding to the write address, invalidating the data.